

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: Hiroyuki Togashi et al.
Serial No.: 10/581,592
Filing Date: June 5, 2006
Examiner/Art Unit: M. Scharich/3611
Title: APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR REDUCING TORQUE
STEERING

COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

M.S. Issue Fee
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the Notice of Allowance dated October 8, 2009, Applicants submit that the Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance in the Office Action dated August 12, 2009 does not conform to the claim language in certain respects, possibly creating confusion regarding the scope of protection. For example, neither claim 1 nor claim 14 recites "a front wheel drive configuration." Moreover, Applicants submit that it is the invention as a whole that is allowable over the prior art.

With respect to claim 1, Applicants submit that the prior art fails to teach or suggest an apparatus for suppressing torque steering in a vehicle having left and right wheels, a left drive shaft coupled to the left wheel via a left outer joint, a right drive shaft coupled to the right wheel via a right outer joint, the apparatus comprising a driving source adapted to accelerate the vehicle from an at rest condition to a predetermined rate of acceleration, and adapted to move from a first position when the vehicle is at rest to a second position during the predetermined rate of acceleration, and a structure that connects the driving source to the left drive shaft and the right drive shaft, which structure is positioned relative to the left and right wheels so that the left and right drive shafts each define a first tilt angle when the driving

source is in the first position, and a second tilt angle that is smaller than the first tilt angle when the driving source is in the second position.

With respect to claim 14, Applicants submit that the prior art fails to teach or suggest an apparatus for suppressing torque steering in a vehicle having left and right wheels, a left drive shaft coupled to the left wheel via a left outer joint to define a left tilt angle, a right drive shaft coupled to the right wheel via a right outer joint to define a right tilt angle, the apparatus comprising driving means for accelerating the vehicle and coupling means for mechanically connecting the left and right drive shafts to the driving means so that the left and right tilt angles decrease as acceleration of the vehicle increases.

Applicants respectfully request entry of these Comments in the Application.

If there are any questions regarding this paper, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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